



Let's connect!



# NEWSLETTER

February 2026 No.2



Horizons 112 is out now online!  
Your printed copy will arrive any day!  
Take a look at the contents to see what's in this new issue...



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## SAVE THE DATE! IOL Freelancer and Sole Trader Online Forum Event



**25<sup>th</sup> March 2026. 9.30am to 12.30 pm**

An online CPD event where Outdoor Learning Freelancers and Soletraders can access business support, gain career development information, share quality OL practice, problem solve on issues specific to their work, and consider their own self care.

- Aimed at members who work on a self employed freelance basis or are sole traders

Just £5 to register for IOL Members. £95 non members. We are finalising the details so **bookings will open soon.**

## IOL AGM 2026 online 19th May at 7pm.



Please come and join us as we look forward to the next year of IOL. Register for free **here...**

## Find out what happened at the North West Conference

The IOL North West Conference took place on 6 February 2026 at Brathay Trust, Ambleside, bringing together over 90 outdoor learning professionals from across the region.

[Read the IOL report here...](#)

One delegate at the event said...  
*"When I attend an Institute for Outdoor Learning conference, egos are left at the door. Whether you are just starting out or are longer in the tooth, everyone is accepted, supported and cared for."*

Read more in their blog, 'You Are Enough: Reflections from the IOL North West Conference' [here...](#)



**Outdoor Learning Youth Work Special Sector Group**  
**24th February 1:30pm.**  
**Free to participate**  
**Zoom Meeting**

**REGISTER HERE**

**Click here for the Outdoor Learning Youth Work Group web area**



## YOU'RE INVITED!

Outdoor Learning Youth Work Special Sector Group – Open Meeting

24th February / 1:30 PM / Zoom Meeting

### WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA?

- Welcome and Introduction from the Chair
- Outdoor Learning Youth Work in practice the Lindley Educational Trust Model – Rehna Yaseen
- The National Youth Strategy – Implications for Outdoor Learning Youth Work – DCMS & UK Youth
- Open Forum



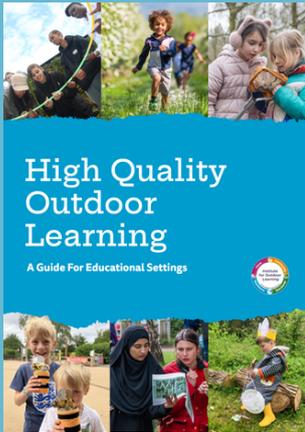
Rehna Yaseen  
Head of Youth & Community  
Lindley Educational Trust



Department for Culture, Media & Sport

Gwen Aiston  
Charity Pierce





**High Quality Outdoor Learning - a new Guide for Educational Settings**  
 A guide for educational settings was launched at the IOL International Conference in November. We are preparing printed copies which you will be able to order online. **How many copies will you need? Contact us to register your interest. Price tbc. Free to download from the IOL website. Use this QR >>>**

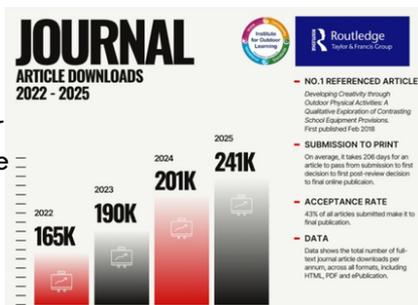


## Experts warn of impact of UK floods on wildlife

Events such as Storm Chandra take a terrible toll on ecosystems, but nature can be part of the solution for mitigating flood waters. As heavy rain and strong winds continue to buffet the west of the UK, conservationists have again been faced with the consequences of extreme weather for wildlife in a warming world. [Read more...](#)

## Increase again in JAEOL downloads

We are delighted to report a 20% increase in Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning (JAEOL) article downloads in 2025. A total of 241,941 full-text journal articles were read across all formats, including HTML, PDF and e-Publications. [Read more...](#) JAEOL is published by IOL and available in print via IOL Membership



## IOL Bushcraft Competency Certificate

Are you ready for your BCC assessment? This is designed to assist and support teachers, instructors and leaders to follow accepted practice and develop a high level of safety and competency in a range of bushcraft skills. It is relevant to for those working in all areas of outdoor learning - education, personal or professional development, therapy, expeditions, etc.

- 23 April, Jack Raven Camp, Kent. Details and [Book here](#)
- 30 Sept, Jack Raven Camp, Kent. Details and [Book here](#)
- [Bushcraft Awards web page](#)
- [BCC web page](#)



## Digimap for Schools

Free geography learning resources for primary and secondary school students. From 2026, more schools and more pupils across GB will gain free access to digital geography tools. Enabling more teachers to be supported with high quality digital mapping in their classrooms - where it can make the biggest difference: [Read more...](#)

## IOL Bushcraft Spring Conference 2026

**Fri 27th Feb to Sun 1st Mar at Danemead Scout Camp, Broxbourne, Herts.**



### Workshop topics

- Outdoor First Aid
- Besom Brooms
- Woodland Toys
- Pendant Carving
- Pyrite Fire & Tinder Fungi
- Fish Leather Tanning & Pouch Making
- Willow Weaving – swallow
- Willow Weaving - bird feeder
- How to market your outdoor provision
- Feathered Game Preparation and Cooking
- Tracking and Tracking Stick
- Fairy Baskets
- Building Resilience in Nature
- Green and Blue Spaces for Mental Health
- Deep preparation for eating
- Wood Branding
- Oven Game: Feeding a Crowd with Fire



**Full Conference bookings include 2 nights camping and all meals**

- IOL Members £156
- FSA Members £173
- Non Members £237
- Full Conference optional
- **upgrade to 2 nights indoor accom £24**

**Single Days (incl meals)**

- IOL Members Saturday £92
- IOL Members Sunday £64
- Non Members Saturday £132
- Non Members Sunday £105



### The IOL JobSite

The premier website for outdoor learning job vacancies

#### vacancies

- SUPPORTING the outdoor learning sector
- SIGNPOSTING for job seekers
- Helping to FILL WORKFORCE vacancies with FREE ADVERTS for organisational IOL Members, and affordable rates for non-members
- Job adverts on the IOL JobSite are SEARCHABLE by category, region, contract type and salary

JOIN US [www.outdoor-learning.org/workforce/job-listing.html](http://www.outdoor-learning.org/workforce/job-listing.html)



### Canada sees its first European robin – but how did it get there?

Birdwatchers flock to Montréal for rare sighting of 'vagrant' bird that has made its home during a bitterly cold winter.



[Read more...](#)

### Educators call for more structured outdoor learning in schools

A recent study has found that primary-aged pupils in Scotland receive an average of seven minutes of outdoor learning per week. Experts say the state of delivery is even more stark than the statistics suggest. [Read more in the Herald Scotland piece...](#)

### The Ultimate Wildlife Quiz (A quiz by Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust)



There are four rounds all about wildlife and Lincolnshire, but it's not just for wildlife buffs. There's something for everyone! LWT wildlife experts have been protecting Lincolnshire's wildlife and wild places for over 70 years. [Read more and do the quiz....](#)

## THE IOL FREE WEBINAR PROGRAMME

Engaging and informing outdoor professionals

**2** 16 have been hosted so far and the final 2 are coming up!

#### Feedback from a recent webinar participant....



*"As a relatively new member of IOL I'd not done one of their webinars yet, so this was a fantastic introduction to what they offer members."*

● **Mental Health First Aid - Recognising and supporting mental health distress on activities**  
Introduces the F.I.R.S.T. mental health incident procedure — a simple, structured approach designed to help outdoor professionals respond confidently and compassionately to participants showing signs of mental distress.

Thursday 19th February at 10am. [Info](#) & [BOOKINGS!](#)

● **Seeing the Forest for the Degrees**  
Integrating the principles of forest school and outdoor learning in tertiary education. As tertiary education moves away from the traditional lecture format, Lucy Thornton and Ely Blyth of the SRUC's Wildlife and Conservation Team explore the opportunities of integrating forest school and outdoor learning principles in degree and further education provision.

Tuesday 3rd March at 4pm. [Info](#) & [BOOKINGS!](#)



IOL Free Webinar series

19 FEBRUARY 2026

[BOOK NOW](#) >>

### Mental Health First Aid - Recognising and supporting mental health distress on activities - WEBINAR



IOL Free Webinar series

3 MARCH 2026

[BOOK NOW](#) >>

### Seeing the Forest for the Degrees - WEBINAR

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### Who to contact at IOL

- Jo Barnett, CEO
- Richard Retallick Business & Operations Manager
- Dave Brooks Membership
- Fiona Exon Job Adverts & Events
- Steve Ulyart IT & Accounts payable